

Green Facts

Managing Pesticides in Ontario

A pesticide is any substance intended to control, destroy, repel, attract or reduce pests. Pesticides include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc. For example, pesticides are used in pet flea and tick shampoos and collars, insect control products, weed control products (including "weed and feeds" and crabgrass control) and mouse and rat poisons.

Ensuring comprehensive environmental protection

Pesticides are regulated by both the federal and provincial governments. All pesticides imported into, sold or used in Canada are regulated nationally under the federal Pest Control Products (PCP) Act. The Ontario Pesticides Act and Regulation 914 provide the province's regulatory framework for pesticide management to protect human health and the natural environment. The Ministry of the Environment, through the legislation, regulates the sale, use, transportation, storage and disposal of pesticides. The ministry issues pesticide applicator, operator and vendor licences. The ministry monitors compliance and enforces the regulation. Mainly through education and training, the ministry provides direction on the responsible use of pesticides and encourages and promotes reduced reliance on pesticides through integrated pest management practices.

Regulatory changes strengthening educational requirements for exterminator licences, improving requirements for recycling pesticides containers and modernizing fumigation requirements are now in place.

Requirements under the Pesticides Act and Regulation 914 include:

- Persons or businesses selling pesticides must hold a vendor's licence and employ a full-time, certified outlet representative on the premises at locations that sell higher risk pesticides.
- Persons who run a pest control company must hold an operator's licence and carry proper insurance.
- Persons who apply pesticides commercially must hold an exterminator's licence.
- Farmers must hold a grower certificate to purchase and use higher risk pesticides.
- Assistants to growers and licensed exterminators must receive basic training to use pesticides.
- Permits are required for the use of more toxic pesticides and pesticides applied by aircraft.

Classifying pesticides

Before a pesticide product may be sold or used in Ontario, it must be classified. The Ontario Pesticides Advisory Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending the placement of pesticide products into one of six schedules used to control sale and use. The committee is made up of members from academia, agriculture, industry, municipalities and the ministries of Environment; Agriculture and Food; Natural Resources; Labour and Health and Long Term Care. The committee also reviews all policies, guidelines and regulations related to pesticides management in the province and makes recommendations to the Minister of the Environment.

The process for classifying pesticides in Ontario has been streamlined. Newly classified products and a

complete listing of classified products is now posted on the Internet at www.opac.gov.on.ca. The sale or use of unclassified products is illegal.

Working Cooperatively

The ministry is assisting in provincial efforts to manage the threat of West Nile virus by regulating the use of pesticides for mosquito control and through monitoring partnerships to ensure that these pesticides do not impact human health and the environment.

Ontario is working with its provincial and federal partners in the development of a new national system for classifying pesticides in Canada through the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee on Pest Management and Pesticides. The proposed new national system is intended to replace existing

federal and provincial classification systems and to make the provincial system easier to understand. The ministry in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Inland Waters - Environment Canada and the City of Toronto has recently completed monitoring Toronto area watersheds for pesticides commonly used in urban lawn care. The ministry is working with the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency, provincial agencies and stakeholders on implementing the Healthy Lawns Strategy. The strategy aims to reduce reliance on pesticide use for lawn care through promoting Integrated Pest Management and the use of reduced risk products.

For more information visit www.ene.gov.on.ca. You can also reach MOE's Public Information Centre by dialling 1-800-565-4923 (toll-free) or (416) 325-4000 in Toronto.